

# Promoting Harmonious Co-existence of Nature and Humans in Guinea Savannah Landscapes of Mole

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## Project Context

Mole National Park (MNP) is the largest and most biologically diverse ecosystem in Ghana with an area of about 4,577 sq km. Right from the onset of its establishment, as early as 1952 and its gazette in 1971, the park has been beset with a myriad of problems and threats. The park is surrounded by 30 fringe communities who depend to a large extent on the natural resources within communal landscapes and also within the park boundaries for their livelihoods, although the later is mostly illegal. Forty years down the line, the threats to the ecological integrity of the park, continuous unabated, with the greatest threat, coming from without.

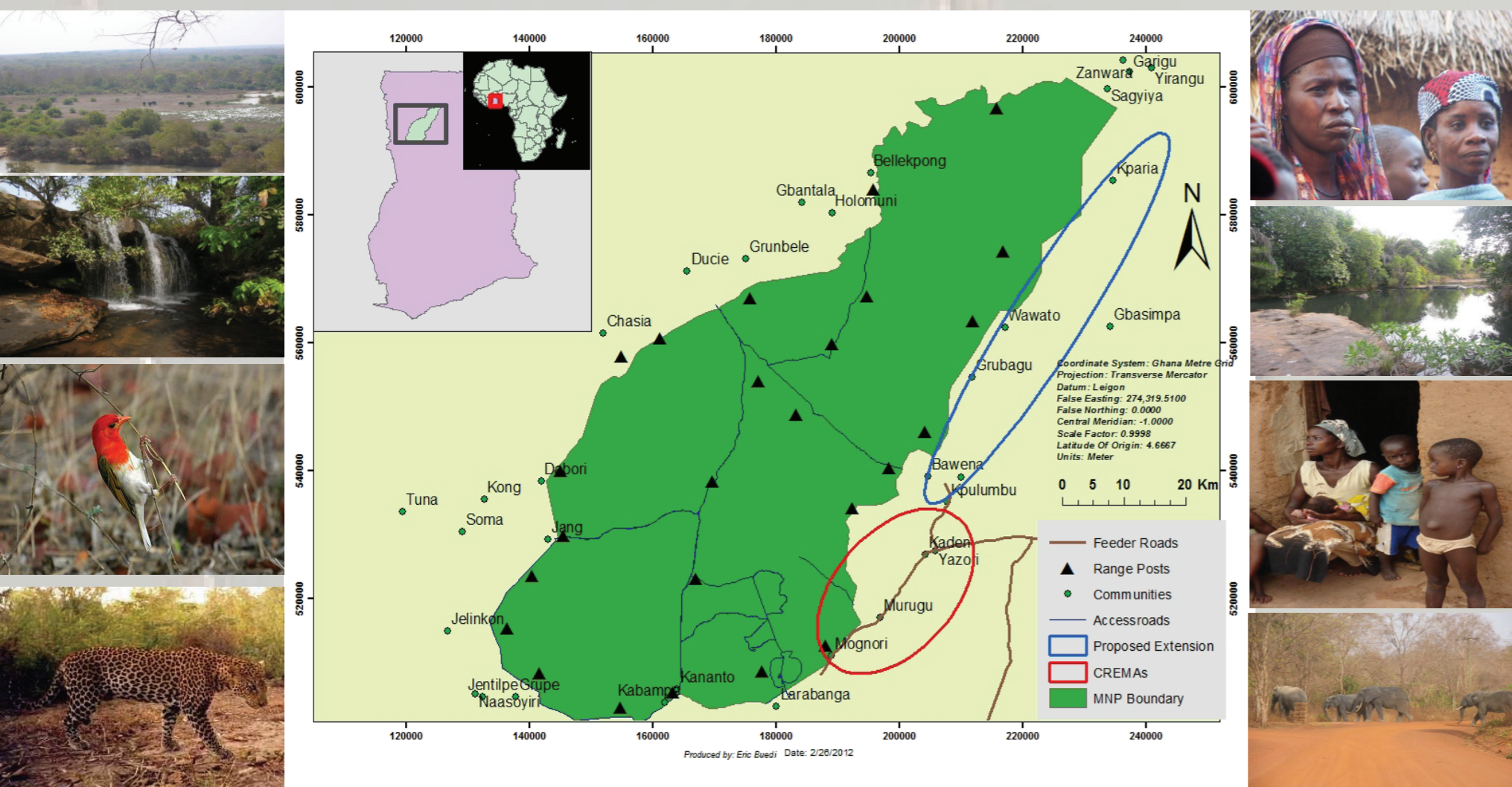


Fig 1. Map Showing regional and local location of Mole and Fringe Communities

## Programme Goals and Approach

Since 2005, with funding from the **IUCN-Netherlands Committee** a public –civil society partnership initiated the Community Resource Management Areas Programme (**CREMAs**) on the fringes of Mole. **CREMAs** if successfully implemented have several advantages of addressing mistrust issues, forge good relationship between park and communities and promote co-existence of wildlife and communities for improved standards of living.

The main goals of implementing **CREMAs** as a land use management approach around Mole were to:

- Harmonise conservation goals by reducing rural poverty and promoting sustainable natural resource use.
- Secure protected areas and off-reserve natural resources as stipulated in the Collaborative Resource Management Policy of (2000) by the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission of Ghana.

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|--|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish natural resource base, key stakeholders &amp; congruence of interests</li> <li>2. Understand local leadership system and political boundaries</li> <li>3. Establish physical, social boundaries of proposed CREMA .</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop community based institutional structures for CREMA</li> <li>2. Develop guidelines and regulations for management at local level</li> <li>3. Secure legal empowerment within the District via by-laws</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Devolution of management authority by Wildlife Division</li> <li>2. Development of CREMA management plan.</li> <li>3. Effective implementation of management plan to ensure achievement of set goals &amp; objectives</li> <li>4. Monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing process</li> </ol> |
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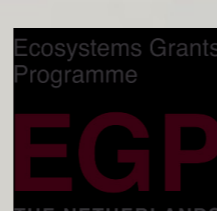
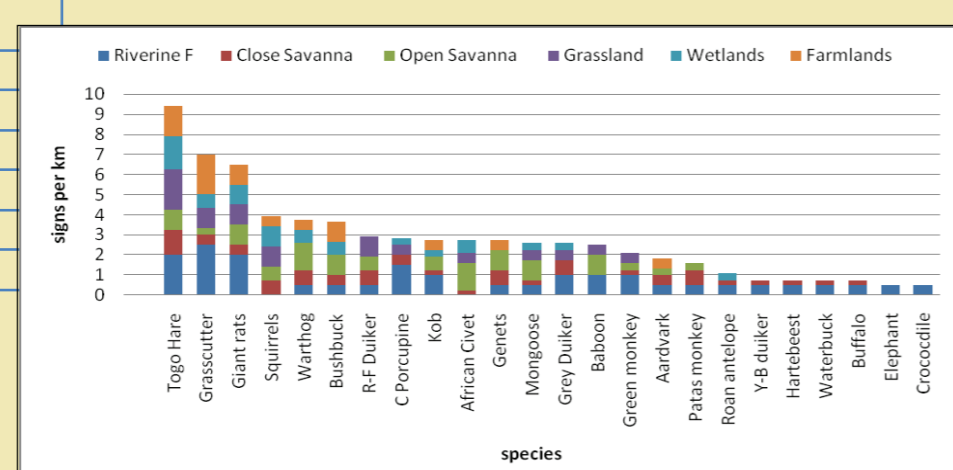
Fig 2. Step wise elaboration of the CREMA Process (Forestry Commission, 2004)

## Results

Perennial ponds/stream	Seasonal ponds	Shrines	Crocodile ponds	Hills and caves
Sobri	Jeligu	Badaa stream	Danbol	Pevo
Kulmasa	Kumbo	Kumbo	Lukuya	Lukuya
Gbarang	Mokogsi	Danbol	Kumbo	Zoo
Donwi	Buligu	Zoo		
Lukuya				
Koso				
Danbol				

Table 1: List of identified resources in the communal lands of Yazori and Kaden

Figure 3: Abundance of animal signs recorded in the Yazori-Kaden CREMA cluster (Source: A Rocha Ghana, 2008)



## Achievements

### Community Appreciation of communal natural resources

Participatory mapping and group discussions served as a confidence building platform. It also set the platform for community members to reflect and appreciate their ecological and cultural resources (Table 1).

### Biodiversity Recruitment and Protection

Since the creation of the CREMAs and the development of nature linked livelihood strategies the communities have become first line boundaries against external threats to Mole. Reports from the Law Enforcement Unit of Mole indicate that, there has not been any poacher arrest in Murugu for the past four years (Personal Communication, 2011). Additionally, wildlife numbers in areas adjoining these community managed areas have increased from analysis of a GIS based Management Information System. Significantly, community and park management relationships have improved, creating opportunities for dialogue and free flow of information between park management and fringe communities.

### Community Based Tourism Initiative

In Mognori, an eco-tourism enterprise has been developed dubbed 'Mognori Eco-Village-'a life in tune with nature'. The enterprise employs about 45 people from the community, Revenue from the enterprise goes into a community development. Since 2008 when it was launched, revenues accruing to the CREMA area has increased by 20% (Figure 4).

### Land use improvements

The CREMA process has resulted in the establishment of a continuum of 64,731 hectares of off-reserve communal socio-ecological landscape benefiting from sustainable land use management practices (Figure 5).

### Comparative Wildlife Occurrence

Wild animal occurrence and observations in communal lands of Mognori extending towards Yazori are the same as those observed in the park, proving its potential for CREMA development (Figure 3).

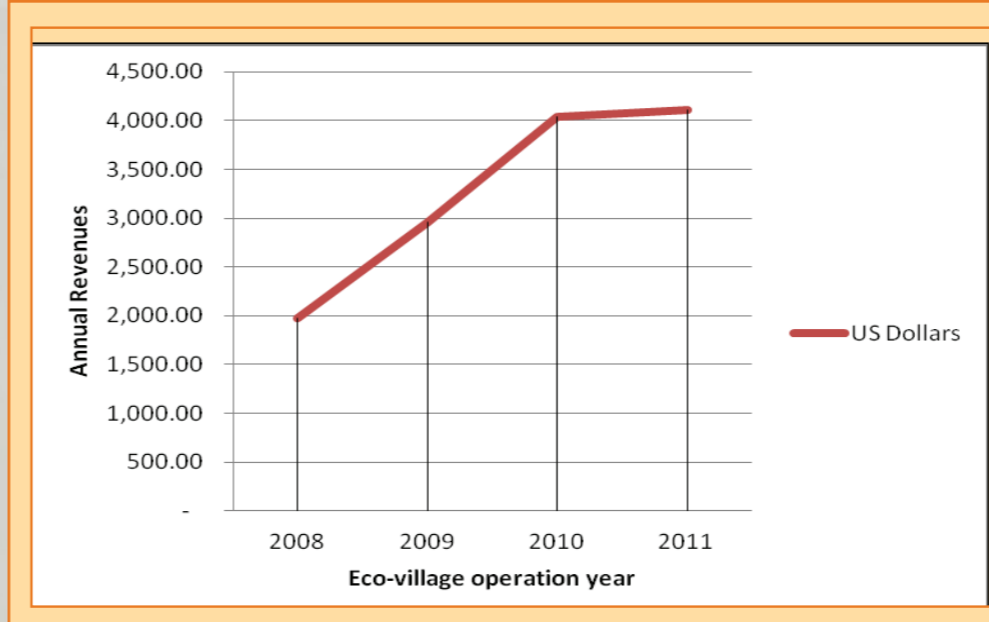


Figure 4. An overview of revenue accruing to Mognori Eco-Village

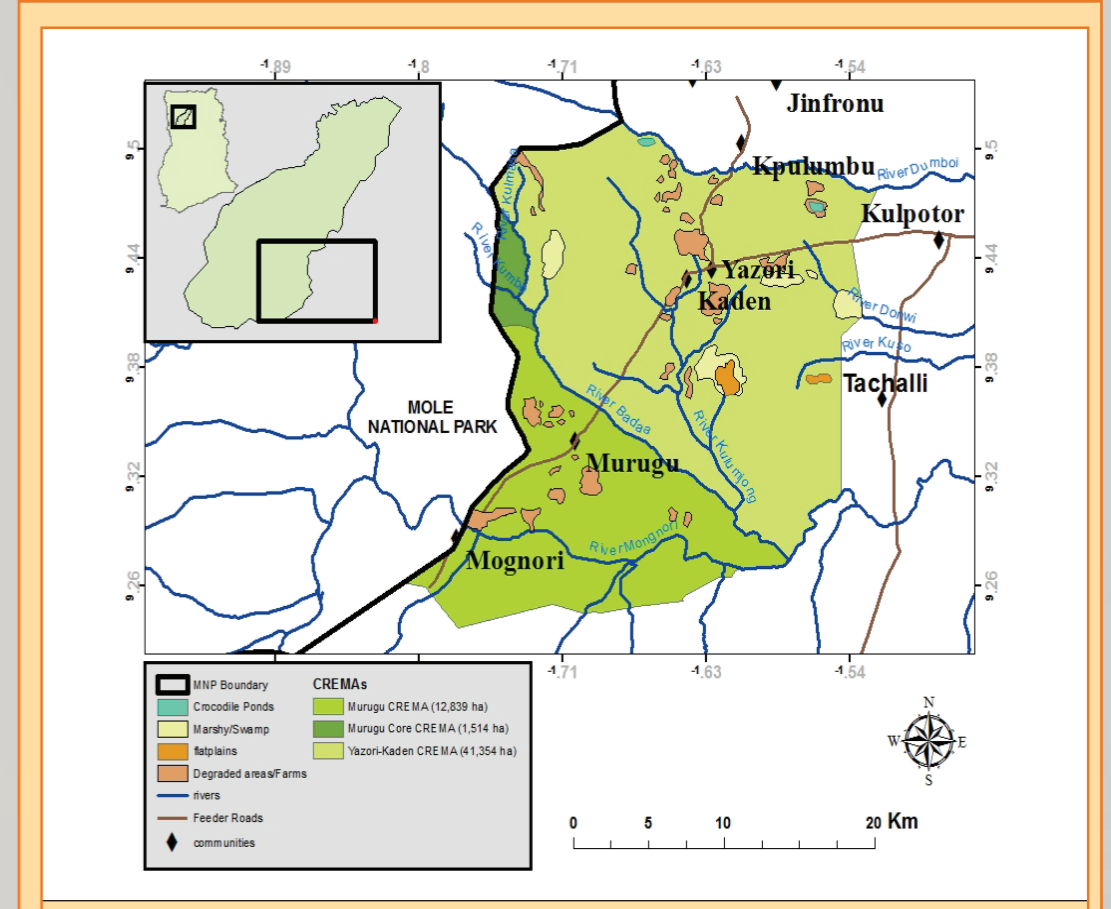


Figure 5. Area of community land under sustainable management

## Lessons and Prospects

- Diversification of existing livelihood strategies and development of compatible nature linked enterprises were major enabling factors for increasing interest and success of sustainability of enterprises within the CREMA communities. This needs to be sustained and up-scaled.
- Integration of local knowledge and natural resource management systems in the

CREMA processes has facilitated greater understanding and commitment among communities.

- There is greater need for the country to develop and implement policies to manage the uncontrolled movement of cattle from the north to the south, which is creating a lot of tension in community managed areas.

## References

1. A Rocha Ghana (2008). Report on Yazori-Kaden CREMA Baseline Biological Survey.
2. Forestry Commission - Ghana (2004). A Brief Guide to establishment of Community Resource Management Areas. A User Manual.

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